

## The Power of Prayer

### Aligning our Hearts

**Focus point today: To pray is to let Jesus come into our hearts, conform our heart and our will to His through our abiding relationship in Him and the meaning of prayer is to glorify the name of God.**

**Revelation 3:20 (ESV)** <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

#### 1. It is not our prayer that moves God, it is God who moves us to pray.

**Isaiah 65:24 (NIV)** <sup>24</sup> Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.

- It is not our prayer that draws Jesus into our hearts, or our prayer which moves Jesus to come in to us. All He needs is access. Jesus enters in of His own accord, because He desires to come in. And He enters in wherever He is not denied entry.
- In Biblical language the meal (Greek word *deipneō*) is symbol of intimate and cheerful fellowship. This gives a deeper glimpse into what prayer is, showing us that God has designed prayer as a means of intimate and cheerful fellowship between God and mankind.
- To pray is to give Jesus permission to implement His powers in the easing of our distress. To pray is to let Jesus glorify His name in the midst of our needs. **Will you give Jesus access to your heart and allow Him to work?**

#### 2. Prayer is for the helpless, but without faith there can be no prayer, no matter how great our helplessness may be.

- Helplessness becomes prayer the moment that you go to Jesus and speak candidly and confidently with Him about your needs. This is to believe.

**Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)** <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

- Scripture contains many pointed passages about praying in faith if we expect to be heard.
  - **Matthew 21:21-22, James 1:6-8, John 14:12-14**
- We don't have to be anxious about our helplessness, and above all, do not let it prevent you from praying.
  - We should thank God for the feeling of helplessness because it is a gift from Him.
  - It is only when we are helpless that we open our hearts to Jesus and let Him help us in our distress, according to His grace and mercy.
  - A living faith in Jesus sees our need for Christ; acknowledging our own helplessness, going to Jesus and saying "Yes" to His moving into our hearts, pouring out our hearts to Him, and leaving everything with Him. God desires a deep relationship with you.
    - **John 6:37, Micah 7:18-20, Psalm 116:1-2**

- God Himself reserves the right to decide when and how the answer is given to our prayers. When we don't receive the answer we want, we fall prey to the lie we think we understand better than He does when and how our prayers should be answered.
  - God's will is not only to hear our prayer, but to give us the best and the richest answer which He, the almighty and all-knowing God, determines.
  - He will send us the answer when it will benefit us and His cause the most. And He will send it to us in that way which will give us the best and most abiding result.

**Isaiah 55:8-9 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. <sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

- As God answers, we are called to trust in Him – that His name may be glorified. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

### 3. Wrestling and Victory in Prayer.

- At prayer is the very heartbeat of our life in God – the breath of our soul – it is obvious that our prayer life becomes the target against which Satan directs his schemes.
- In **Ephesians 6:12** the Apostle Paul reminds us of our wrestling is not against flesh and blood but against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.
  - Respect your adversary but stand firm and in the victory of Christ.
- The first and decisive battle in connection with prayer is when we are to make the choice to be alone with God every day. Often times its as though everything has entered into a plot to prevent this time.
- The next battle is when we enter into prayer; your thoughts can go back and forth between God and the many pressing duties, tasks and relationships that await you and your mind is torn to shreds.
  - You feel as though the time you are spending in prayer is time wasted and you stop praying. Here the enemy has won a victory in battle.
    - We must remember to open our hearts to God and give Him access to our needs. We must center our minds on Christ.

**Philippians 4:7 (ESV)** <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- Be reminded of the Word of God (both the *logos and rhema*) is powerful, and always victorious!
  - **Ephesians 6:17, Isaiah 55:11, Luke 1:37, Hebrews 4:12**

### 4. The Spirit of Prayer

- The Holy Spirit helps us in our prayers.

**Romans 8:26-27 (NIV)** <sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

- The Holy Spirit reminds us we are God's children, so that we can come to God as "our Father." • As we walk by the Holy Spirit, He shapes our hearts to align with His heart, and our will to align with His will. We want His kingdom to come and His will to be done. • During tough times, the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses, going to the Father on our behalf and translating our groans into prayers.

## ACTS Prayer Model

**Adoration:** It means adoring, or worshiping, God with your words for who He is.

- **Psalm 8:1:** “O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.”
- **Isaiah 6:3:** “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”
- **Luke 1:46–48:** “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.”

**Confession:** It means the admission of what we did was wrong, agreeing with God that our sin is indeed sin. Related to confession is repentance which involves a desire to change course. We not only acknowledge our sin but take steps to overcome and forsake it. Confession without repentance is only words.

- **Psalm 51:1-2:** “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.”
- **Daniel 9:20:** “I went on praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, pleading with the Lord my God for Jerusalem, his holy mountain.”
- **Psalm 139:23-24:** “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”
- **Hebrews 4:16:** “Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

**Thanksgiving:** It means expressing gratitude to God for what He’s done or will do.

- **1 Chronicles 16:8:** “Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done.”
- **Psalm 136:1:** “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.”
- **John 11:41:** “So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me.”

**Supplication:** It means making requests of God.

- **Philippians 4:6:** “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”
- **James 1:5:** “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him”
- **Hebrews 5:7:** During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.